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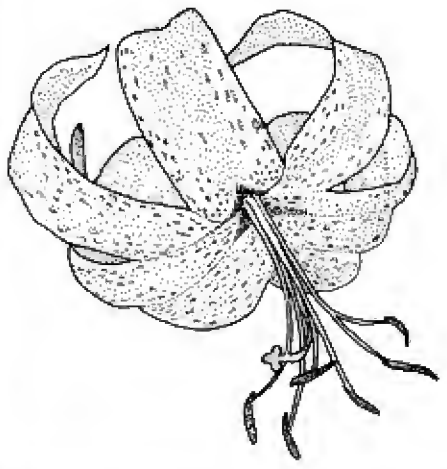

THE TURK'S

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DELAWARE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY SUMMER 2007

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NATURAL QUOTES

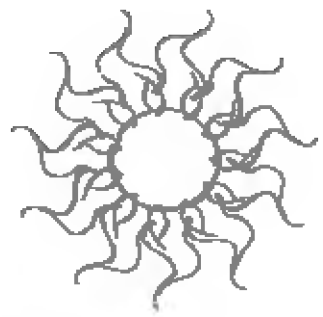
"Love of the land is the basis for the unending struggle of those who really care against those who see only material rewards."

Sigurd F. Olsen, *Reflections from the North Country*, 1976

A GLOWING RED-ORANGE SUNRISE WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

April through June

Jeremy & Emmalea Ernes
Cece & Ed Niemi
Martha Stephens
Donna Valese



HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

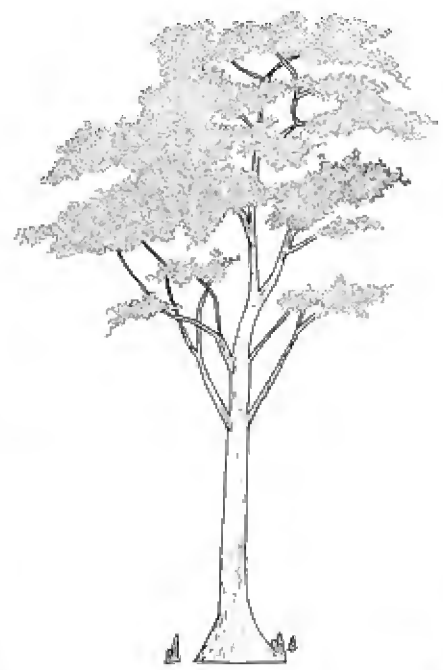
The Delaware Native Plant Society is open to everyone ranging from the novice gardener to the professional botanist. One of the primary goals of the society is to involve as many individuals as possible.

The DNPS is working on some significant projects at this time. We have completed four reforestation projects in the Prime Hook area, at Blackbird Creek in New Castle County and Cedar Creek in Sussex County where we have installed tree tubes around newly sprouted seedlings, and are performing annual management of the sites. Help is also needed at our native plant nursery at the St. Jones Reserve with the monitoring and watering of plants along with many other nursery activities.

For more information, E-mail us at dnps@delawarenativeplants.org. Or visit our website at www.delawarenativeplants. org. Our website will have all of the past issues of *The Turk's Cap* along with a large section on native plants, as well as links to other environmental and plant related organizations.

The DNPS Vision

The purpose of the Delaware Native Plant Society (DNPS) is to participate in and encourage the preservation, conservation, restoration, and propagation of Delaware's native plants and plant communities. The Society provides information to government officials, business people, educators, and the general public on the protection, management, and restoration of native plant ecosystems. The DNPS encourages the use of native plants in the landscape by homeowners, businesses, and local and state governments through an on-going distribution of information and knowledge by various means that includes periodic publications, symposia, conferences, workshops, field trips, and a growing statewide membership organized by the DNPS.



THOUGHTS FROM THE EDGE OF THE GARDEN

SOCIETY INTERN

Our intern for the year has completed his mission and is now done with his internship with the Society. He was a senior at Polytech High School and has successfully graduated as well, so we wish him luck in his future botanical adventures.

2008 DNPS CALENDAR

We've been working on this for a while, but we finally have a completed draft. Member, and photographer extraordinaire, David G. Smith has been working on this and has gone with an online company to do the printing. The company is www.lulu.com which does "on demand" printing. We have still have some tweaking to do with the format of the calendar, but once it is done, the 12-month calendar will have two forms of availability. The first will be a small number of them on hand at events such as our native plant sale, where you can purchase one in person. The second is through www.lulu.com. Pricing has not been established yet, but the cost will be around $17.00 to $20.00. Once we have all the details worked out, and an availability date set, we will inform everyone.

MEETINGS IN ALL 3 COUNTIES

For years now we have been having our bi-monthly meetings at the St. Jones Reserve here in Kent Co., but have had many members say that they would like to come to meetings, but it is too far to drive. We had a discussion about this at our last meeting and we are going to change meeting locations. We have a total of 6 meetings each year, and from now on will have 2 in Sussex, 2 in Kent, and 2 in New Castle counties. The location in Kent will stay the same at the St. Jones Reserve. The location in New Castle will be at the office of the New Castle County Conservation District at 2430 Old County Rd., Newark, DE, 19702. We are currently looking for a location in Sussex, and if anyone has any ideas, please contact Bill at william.mcavoy@state.de.us. Details of each meeting will be sent out at later dates.

NURSERY UPDATE

The nursery is in full swing right now. The heat and drought of May hit hard and we lost some plants. June was good with the temperature and rainfall and we caught back up, but so far July has been rough. Overall, the plants are doing fine, but they all need to be watered every other day. The automated sprinkler system in the greenhouse works perfectly and has drastically reduced mortality, so we are very happy with that. We haven't scheduled any volunteer workdays yet because the nursery managers schedule changes on a daily basis and it is difficult to schedule or coordinate things in advance.

LOOKING FOR AN EVENTS COORDINATOR

Quentin Schlieder, who has been our Events/Program Coordinator for many years now is taking a sabbatical and we are looking for a replacement. The person in this position would have the job of scheduling speakers for our bi-monthly meetings, scheduling field trips and field trip leaders, scheduling workshops and workshop leaders, planning the annual meeting (with the help of all of the Officers) and writing up announcements for all these events. If you are interested, please write to ezuelke@juno.com.

ANNUAL MEETING

President, Bill McAvoy is still working on this, but we are making progress. We have yet to set a date,

Continued on page 5

Resources & Reviews

More Wildlife On Your Land: A Guide for Private Landowners

Authored by Neil F. Payne. a how-to book written in everyday language for the layperson—mainly the landowner who owns a few or many acres in the United States and Canada. This book describes how you can change your habitat to attract more wildlife, from songbirds to deer, to your property.

Resources & Reviews

Wildlife Habitat Management of Forestlands, Rangelands, and Farmlands

Authored by Neil F. Payne & Fred C. Bryant. This book brings together an extensive compilation of tried-and-proven manipulation techniques for enhancing the biodiversity of upland habitat for edge and interior game and non-game wildlife.

FEATURE ARTICLE

LANDSCAPE DESIGN BASICS

So, you've just moved into an old house that you built an addition on to and renovated with recycled building materials and solar power equipment. The yard is chewed up from the bulldozer and trucks, a tree had to be felled, and you took the opportunity to cut down and rip out all the previous Japanese honeysuckle, autumn olive, and juniper plantings. What's left is a muddy, grassless barren landscape: a perfect canvas to let your artistic imagination flourish and do a little landscape design.

Landscape design has numerous facets to it and can, if you let it, be an overwhelming task. However, creativity and organization are the keys. Of critical importance in the landscaping process is harnessing your ideas and creating a plan in advance. You don't want to have to do this physically demanding work more than once. Understand each phase of the job well and how it relates to the project as a whole. Create a step-by-step guide for yourself, as this will organize all your thoughts on paper. One initial purpose of landscape design is to meld human technology (e.g., a house, deck or barn) into the natural surroundings. This is achieved by exploring all your landscaping options: from plant selection to ponds and waterfalls to hardscapes (e.g., retaining walls, walkways, trellises, arbors, gazebos) to lighting. It's also important to remember that location is a major factor in the design. Plants and construction principles will vary geographically. Local nurseries, books with hardiness planting zones, local county extension offices, and botanical guides will all have good tips. In the end, common sense is the key as you answer some basic questions: are the lighting conditions full sun, partial sun, or shade? Is the elevation high and dry or low and moist? Is the soil acidic or alkaline, rich organic or sandy? Is the climate hot, cold, rainy, desert, windy, salty? You may have a combination of these conditions (microclimates) on your property.

With the analysis discussed above, you can pick the appropriate vegetation and design for your particular situation. For example, if you have a very moist, low-lying area on your property, you would select plants that naturally grow in that habitat, such as sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*), fetterbush (*Leucothoe racemosa*), and pin oak (*Quercus palustris*). I strongly encourage you to incorporate native plants into your landscape, including native vegetation already on your property. Additionally, be sure to account for possible damage to the existing site; check utility and water line placement, and safe equipment access.

Now you can let some creativity come into the mix by combining elements of art and science to create a functional, aesthetically pleasing living space. When planning bed locations, hardscapes and appropriate plants, you may want to consider the following: line, texture, scale, linear perspective and focal points, unity through consistent style, balance, transition, proportion, repetition, rhythm, plant shapes, and the many different types of color schemes. The best way to visualize all of these elements is to take a picture of your house, various views of the yard and from inside the house looking out windows. If you own a digital camera, you have the opportunity to utilize one of the many landscape design computer programs on the market. You simply open the digital pictures you took and add graphics and symbols to the picture to make your visions come to life. You can also take basic measurements of your property and sketch things out on graph paper to make a blueprint. It's especially important to keep in mind what your landscape design may look like 20 years from now, as it will be drastically different from when you first plant it. This future-oriented vision will keep you from placing the wrong plant in the wrong spot.

With plan in hand, you can now finally go outside. One of the first steps is to outline, with twine and dowel rods, the position of the elements you've chosen such as beds, retaining walls, patios, walkways, driveways, fountains, rock piles, trellises, arbors, pergolas, gazebos and lighting fixtures. Next, you could cut out circular pieces of cardboard or construction paper in the approximate ground-level diameter that your plants will reach at maturity and place them in the beds to get a feel for how things will be years from now to avoid any major blunders in placement. Now on to surface preparation and ripping up any remaining grass and unwanted vegetation that's in the way, and leveling the soil out. The next step is to build or install bed borders, retaining walls, walkways and wooden structures. And last but not least, installing lighting fixtures, watering systems, and planting all the plants.

Another way to go about landscaping your yard is creating native plant plantings and arrangements. If you decide to go this route there is less of need for establishing formal planting beds and hand surfaced structures, such as retaining walls, or brick or log borders.

There are many different ways to go about the process of landscape design, and the final design can be as simple or complex as you want it. No matter what you end up with, a little advanced planning, and some common sense will result in a beautiful yard that you and your family will enjoy for many years. The following is a list of a few websites to visit for more information, and lists of books: http://www.taunton.com/store/index.asp; http://www.411homerepair.com/garden/landscapebooks.shtml; http://www.taoherbfarm.com/herbs/resources/design.htm; http://www.buildfind.com/bookstore; http://www.homestore.com/LawnGarden/landscaping.

GARDENING WITH NATIVE PLANTS

HIGH BUSH BLUEBERRY (VACCINIUM CORYMBOSUM)

NATURAL HISTORY

It's about 5:00 PM on an early July day and I've just returned from the woods with about a cup full of mixed wild berries for tomorrow's cereal. Yesterday, my wife Nan picked a heaping quart of high bush blueberries – the first of the season, for a blueberry pie. Its now mid-summer and Delaware is blessed with a multitude of wild berries. From open fields to woodlands this is the time of year to grab a bucket and perhaps some insect repellant and head out in search of the numerous varieties of blueberries, blackberries, huckleberries, raspberries and others that call Delaware home. Of all the wild berries native to Delaware, perhaps the most favored is the high bush blueberry and for good reason! Not only are the berries relished for use in pies, jams and jellies, cobblers, ice cream desserts, cereal toppings, muffins, pancakes and toppings for any variety of desserts and they are extremely high on the list of the most healthy foods available. Top that off with their beautiful cascading lantern shaped flowers, large clusters of easily picked fruits and spectacular bright red fall colors it's hard to imagine a more perfect shrub for the landscape. Of course the high bush blueberry is not only a treat for us human types, they are most certainly a valuable resource for all variety of wildlife. In early spring, their flowers are visited by untold numbers of bees, moths, butterflies and other insects that in return for the rich nectar are essential pollinators. Then of course throughout mid summer, the berries are relished by countless numbers of birds (no less than 35 species of birds feed on their nutritious fruits) and mammals that compete for their nutrient rich bounty. It's no wonder that people who cultivate the large variety of commercial blueberries often find it necessary to place a fine mesh screen over their treasured plants to protect their berries from being pilfered by any variety of wildlife seeking an easy meal. Yes, the large numbers of commercially available blueberries are all derived from our wild high bush blueberry. Countless years of hybridizing have produced vigorous plants that are well behave and consistently yield large quantities of large fruits, but don't be fooled, there is no substitute for the rich flavor and healthy attributes of our own native un-altered high bush blueberry!

WHERE TO GROW

High bush blueberries are typically found growing in abundance in moist woodlands, roadsides and thickets throughout the Eastern United States and Canada. Growing from 5 to 15 feet in height, they are ideally suited to be grown in a thicket, along woodland edges, as the high point in a garden with other native berries or for the more harvest minded gardener in open rows or singular plantings. Blueberries require a relatively acid soil for good growth, so the soil should be within the range of 4.5 to 5.2 pH. Soils with a higher pH may require the addition of finely ground sulphur or aluminum sulfate to lower the pH. Though, high bush blueberries are typically found in forested areas, for maximum flowering and fruit production they should be grown where they receive a fair amount of sunlight for at least portions of the day. High bush blueberries are a hearty plant, capable of withstanding the harshest of Delaware's winters and are seldom affected by bacteria and viruses. Because of their somewhat bitter leaves they are not a favorite of herbivores, such as deer, rabbits and groundhogs, making them very suitable for more rural habitats. Regardless of your preference for their spring flowers, summer fruits, wildlife value or spectacular fall color, high bush blueberry most certainly deserves a place in your landscape!

PROPAGATION AND CARE

High bush blueberry will propagate readily from seed or from cuttings. From seed, collect and macerate the fully ripened fruits. Place the resulting mash in water and mix well. Most pulp and unsound seeds will float to the surface and may be skimmed off. After drying the seeds may be stored under refrigeration until ready for planting, however, the seeds of high bush blueberry do not require pretreatment for germination and may be planted immediately. Seeds will sprout and grow quite readily – when Nan and I used to grow orchids in our woods in the summer, it was not unusual to have numerous high bush blueberry seedlings sprout in the orchid pots after bringing them in for the winter – they would very quickly reach a height of 6 to 8 inches before we discovered the pesky plants and pull them out! Because wild high bush blueberries exhibit widely varying traits relative to fruit size and productivity, propagation by cuttings might be desired when a particularly productive specimen is found. Softwood cuttings will root best in May with decreasing success in as the summer progresses. Take healed cuttings that have just completed their primary growth and treat with a rooting hormone prior to planting in a peat/perlite mixture and mist regularly. Once rooted, cutting may be over wintered outside under protective layer of mulch.

LORE

High bush blueberries were a staple food of Native Americans. The fruits were eaten fresh off the bush, dried for later use or dried and mixed with other berries and strips of dried venison to make pemmican – an important winter staple. Of course, the value of high bush blueberries is unsurpassed for pies, jellies, jams and a multitude of mouthwatering desserts and toppings, and remember nothing beats to flavor of our wild native berries – good picking!

Bob Edelen, DNPS Member

Resources & Reviews

Wildlife Habitat Management of Wetlands

Authored by Neil F. Payne. This guide describes direct habitat management techniques for a wide variety of game and non-game species, and offers tried-and-proven techniques for improving, preserving, and developing wetlands.

Resources & Reviews

Conservation Management of Freshwater Habitats - Lakes, Rivers, and Wetlands

Authored by Neville C. Morgan & Peter S. Maitland. In this book the authors have applied research knowledge to the solution of practical problems facing wildlife conservation in freshwater habitats. Subjects covered include: evaluation of the conservation interest of sites; practical protection and management of freshwater habitats; species conservation.

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDGE OF THE GARDEN

Continued from page 2

but we should have it sometime in the early fall and are looking at the end of Sept. or early Oct., but not on a Sunday because of football season! Abbotts Mill has offered facilities for a meeting. Bill also discovered a wonderful place that could be a potential site; the Doe Branch Nature Preserve in Sussex County. It has old growth forest, cedar swamps, a great diversity of plants, and would be a fantastic place for a field trip.

PROBLEMS WITH BROWN-EYED SUSANS

DNPS members, Quentin Schlieder and Flavia Rutkosky, passed this information along to share.

Leaf Spots on Rudbeckia

Two common leaf spots affect rudbeckia in the St. Louis area. Both rarely endanger the survival of the plant but both can cause depreciation of the foliage. One is caused by a fungus and the other by a bacterium.

Symptoms and Diagnosis

Septoria leaf spot is caused by the fungus Septoria rudbeckiae and causes small 1/8 - 1/4 inch spots on the leaves. Small, black, pinpoint size fruiting bodies (pycnidia) form in the center of the spots. Lower leaves are affected first. The disease then moves up the plant by splashing water. Angular leaf spot of rudbeckia is most common on the cultivar 'Goldsturm'. It begins as small, brown, angular spots on lower leaves, which may appear water-soaked but can quickly expand to affect the whole leaf. It begins at the base of the plant and moves up. Angular leaf spot is caused by a bacterium. The absence of fungal pycnidia and the presence of bacterial streaming under microscopic examination can be used to differentiate angular leaf spot from septoria leaf spot.

Life Cycle

Both organisms overwinter in infected debris in the garden. Initial infection occurs in late spring or early summer on the lower leaves and then spread up the plant. Plants are rarely killed, but plants can look unsightly by early fall.

Integrated Pest Management Strategies

1. Clean up old foliage each fall and then live with the disease. Sanitation can go a long way to helping control both diseases. Collect and dispose of old foliage in the fall or by late winter to help prevent early infection.

2. Provide good air circulation and avoid overhead watering. Keeping the leaves dry and help prevent movement of the fungi or bacteria by not watering overhead. If irrigation is necessary, use soaker hoses or at least water early in the day so the foliage can dry before nightfall.

3. Apply chemical protectants. Septoria leaf spot can be controlled with fungicides containing chlorophalonil or copper. Angular leaf spot can be controlled by applying a copper-based fungicide such as Bordeaux mixture as needed started in early spring. Kocide is also effective. Apply at the first signs of disease to protect healthy yet unaffected foliage.

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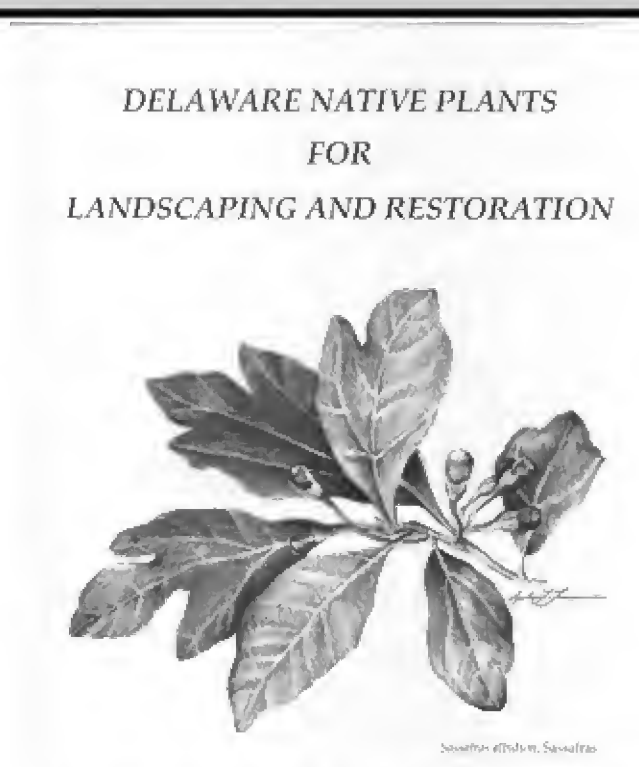


The Second Edition of the DE Native Plant Society's Delaware Native Plants for Landscaping and Restoration is now available!

With an additional 2 pages of information, and an additional 44 new species, and one whole new section on ground covers, this new booklet is a veritable cornucopia of information. It even has a new color scheme!

It's still only $5.00, and we have plenty of them to go around. It's a great resource for anyone venturing into native gardening-or for those with established gardens, a good source of inspiration for new species to add. We've had many people order them as gifts too.

TWO NEW UPCOMING COLUMNS

In the last issue (Spring 2007, Volume 10, Number 1) we had a Feature Article by member Susan Yost about medicinal and edible wild native plants. Well this got our brains spinning and we have decided to pick up where that article left off and include a new column that will feature a recipe using some wild, native plant(s) and details on harvesting, preparation and use. If anyone has a recipe that they know of, please send it in and we will include it in an issue.

The other idea we had for a fun article would be to do a "spotlight" on a Society member. This article would be an written interview with a set list of questions that person could answer and send in to us. Preferably, we would like to have people volunteer for this, as not all of us are keen to being published in a newsletter, but we may on occasion ask someone if they would be willing to participate. We have some very interesting members in this Society, and we would all benefit from learning about the nature side of your lives.

Resources & Reviews

Assessment and Management of Plant Invasions

Authored by James O. Luken & John W. Thieret. Biological invasion of native plant communities is a high-priority problem in the field of environmental management. Resource managers, biologists, and all those involved in plant communities must consider ecological interactions when assessing both the effects of plant invasion and the long-term effects of management. Sections of the book cover human perceptions of invading plants, assessment of ecological interactions, direct management, and regulation and advocacy. It also includes an appendix with descriptive data for many of the worst weeds.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, 11 August 2007—Maryland native plant society guided walk in Downs Park, Anne Arundel County from 10 AM to 3 PM. Downs Park overlooks the Chesapeake Bay with a variety of habitats typical of Maryland's coastal plain, including mature upland oak-chestnut-heath forest, sandy oak-pine-heath woodland, sphagnum seeps, wetlands, and shoreline habitat. We will see a diversity of native plants and wildflowers, such as American chestnut; a variety of oaks and pines; many species of ferns; numerous heaths, including southern high bush blueberry; and many summer wildflowers, some of which are scarce closer to Washington and Baltimore. Contact Rod/Meghan, cecropia13@msn.com or 301-809-0139, or on the web at http://www.mdflora.org/events for more information.

August & September 2007—Guided tours and continuing education classes at the Mt. Cuba Center. Call 302.239.4244, or on the web at http://mtcubacenter.org/ for more details and to register.

September 2007—Bowman's hill wildflower preserve fall plant sale. From 10 AM to 4 PM for a week in September. Contact them at 215.862.2924, or on the web at http://www.bhwp.org/seed_catalog/plantsale.htm for more information.

Saturday, 8 September 2007—Adkins Arboretum fall native plant sale. From 9 AM to 1 PM. Contact the arboretum at 410.634.2847, or On the web at http://www.adkinsarboretum.org/sales.html for more information.

Tuesday, 18 September 2007—DNPS bi-montly meeting. Meeting location to be announced later.

Wednesday, 26 September & Wednesday, 24 October 2007—Delaware Center for Horticulture. Taking care of your garden soil: a two-part series. Learn about proper soil care, maintenance, and soil testing in our first workshop. Take home a UDel soil testing kit and bring the UDel lab results to the second workshop to review them and work out a maintenance plan. The workshop is led by DCH Education Manager Sarah Deacle and other DCH staff. Workshop series fee includes soil test. Contact the Center at 302.658.6262, or On the web at http://www.delhort.org for more information.

26-30 September 2007—Maryland native plant society 2007 annual fall conference. On the web at http://www.mdflora.org/events/fall2007/fall2007conference.html for more information and to download the conference program.

DNPS Bi-monthly meetings for 2007—All meetings are on the third Tuesday of every other month at 7 PM. Locations will be announced prior to each meeting.

Membership Application

Delaware native Plant Society

Member Information

Name:

_____

Business Name or Organization:

_____

Address:

_____

City and Zip Code:

_____

Telephone (home/work):

_____

E-mail address:

_____

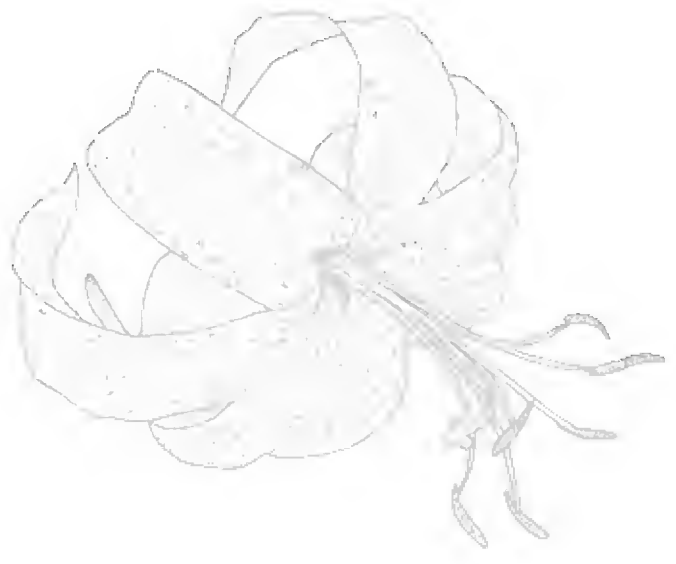
" Full-time Student $10.00
" Individual $15.00
" Family or Household $18.00
" Contributing $50.00
" Business $100.00
" Lifetime $500.00
" Donations are also welcome $_____

Membership benefits include:
* The DNPS quarterly newsletter, The Turk's Cap
* Native plant gardening and landscaping information
* Speakers, field trips, native plant nursery and sales

Total Amount Enclosed: $

Make check payable to:
DE Native Plant Society
P.O. Box 369, Dover, DE 19903

Delaware Native Plant Society
P.O. Box 369
Dover, Delaware 19903



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